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CHRC Applauds Minister's Move to Broaden Hate Propaganda Law

OTTAWA - November 30, 2001 - The Chief Commissioner of the Canadian Human Rights Commission, Michelle Falardeau-Ramsay, welcomed the Justice Minister's proposal yesterday to broaden protection under the Criminal Code to include gays and lesbians targeted by hate propaganda.

Section 318(4) of the Code, which contains the hate provisions, currently addresses hate based on colour, race, religion or ethnic origin only. The federal government had announced its intention three years ago to include gays and lesbians in the law, although concrete action has yet to be taken.

Mrs. Falardeau-Ramsay expressed the Commission's wholehearted support for this move, although she noted with regret that it appears to have taken the recent beating death of a 41-year-old gay man in Vancouver to prompt renewed discussion of this important issue.

"The gay and lesbian community in this country is no less deserving of protection under the law than any other group targeted by hatemongers. I urge the Minister of Justice to move forward with this amendment as quickly as possible," she concluded.

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